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The progress being made by the USSR in the development of nuclear weapons is also a factor of prime military and psychological importance in the world situation. The ultimate acquisition by the Soviets of a stockpile of nuclear weapons together with an effective means of delivery sufficient to inflict crippling damage on the U.S. will result in a virtual balance of power between the U.S. and the USSR in this field. As such circumstances develop, the attitudes of U.S. allies, many of whom are already critically vulnerable to Soviet atomic attack, will assume increasing significance. If, in the U.S. reaction to this developing situation, they detect signs of fear, a preoccupation with defensive psychology, and a tendency to abandon positions of strength beyond the Western hemisphere, they may well suffer a loss of confidence in U.S. leadership which will make them susceptible to Soviet pressures to adopt more neutral positions in the "cold war". They may also become susceptible to Soviet threats of atomic bombardment in the event of general war. On the other hand, if U.S. allies and the countries of the free world in general, aligned with the U.S. as they are by the common interests of free men, see in the U.S. a determined and confident posture in opposing the common threat, their will to resist Soviet pressures and threats may well be strengthened. In this respect, their attitude will be materially affected by their evaluation of the overall military offensive strength of the Western alliances as a deterrent to general war.

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